

NORTHERN FUNDS

Global Real Estate Index Fund



Summary Prospectus | July 31, 2018

Ticker: NGREX

Before you invest, you may want to review the Fund's complete Prospectus, which contains more information about the Fund and its risks. You can find the Fund's complete Prospectus and other information about the Fund online at northerntrust.com/prospectus. You can also get this information at no cost by calling 800-595-9111 or by sending an e-mail request to northern-funds@ntrs.com. If you purchase shares of the Fund through a financial intermediary (such as a bank or a broker-dealer), the complete Prospectus and other information are also available from your financial intermediary. The Fund's complete Prospectus and Statement of Additional Information, both dated July 31, 2018, as supplemented, are incorporated by reference into this summary prospectus and may be obtained, free of charge, at the website, phone number or e-mail address noted above.

INVESTMENT OBJECTIVE

The Fund seeks to provide investment results approximating the overall performance of the securities included in the MSCI® ACWI® IMI Core Real Estate Index.

FEES AND EXPENSES OF THE FUND

This table describes the fees and expenses that you may pay if you buy and hold shares of the Fund.

Shareholder Fees (fees paid directly from your investment)

Maximum Sales Charge (Load) Imposed on Purchases (as a percentage of offering price)	None
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Redemption Fee (within 30 days of purchase) (as a percentage of amount redeemed, if applicable)	2.00%
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Annual Fund Operating Expenses (expenses that you pay each year as a percentage of the value of your investment)

Management Fees	0.40%
Other Expenses	0.13%
Transfer Agent Fees	0.02%
Other Operating Expenses	0.11%

Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses	0.53%
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Expense Reimbursement ⁽¹⁾	(0.03)%
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Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses After Expense Reimbursement	0.50%
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⁽¹⁾ Northern Trust Investments, Inc. has contractually agreed to reimburse a portion of the operating expenses of the Fund (other than certain excepted expenses, i.e., Acquired Fund Fees and Expenses, the compensation paid to each Independent Trustee of the Trust, expenses of third party consultants engaged by the Board of Trustees, membership dues paid to the Investment Company Institute and Mutual Fund Directors Forum, expenses in connection with the negotiation and renewal of the revolving credit facility, extraordinary expenses and interest) to the extent the "Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses" exceed 0.50%. The "Total Annual Fund Operating Expenses After Expense Reimbursement" may be higher than the contractual limitation as a result of the excepted expenses that are not reimbursed. This contractual limitation may not be terminated before July 31, 2019 without the approval of the Board of Trustees.

EXAMPLE

The following Example is intended to help you compare the cost of investing in the Fund with the cost of investing in other mutual funds. The Example assumes that you invest \$10,000 in the Fund for the time periods indicated and then redeem all of your shares at the end of those periods. The Example also assumes that your investment has a 5% return each year and

that the Fund's operating expenses remain the same. Although your actual costs may be higher or lower, based on these assumptions your costs would be:

1 Year	3 Years	5 Years	10 Years
\$51	\$167	\$293	\$662

PORTFOLIO TURNOVER. The Fund pays transaction costs, such as commissions, when it buys and sells securities (or "turns over" its portfolio). A higher portfolio turnover rate may indicate higher transaction costs and may result in higher taxes when Fund shares are held in a taxable account. These costs, which are not reflected in annual portfolio operating expenses or in the Example, affect the Fund's performance. During the most recent fiscal year, the Fund's portfolio turnover rate was 9.53% of the average value of its portfolio.

PRINCIPAL INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

Under normal circumstances, the Fund will invest substantially all (and at least 80%) of its net assets in equity securities included in the MSCI® ACWI® IMI Core Real Estate Index, in weightings that approximate the relative composition of the securities contained in the Index. The MSCI® ACWI® IMI Core Real Estate Index is a free float-adjusted, market capitalization index that consists of large, mid and small-cap stocks engaged in the ownership, development and management of specific core property type real estate. The MSCI® ACWI® IMI Core Real Estate Index excludes companies, such as real estate services and real estate financing companies that do not own properties.

As of May 31, 2018, the MSCI® ACWI® IMI Core Real Estate Index consisted of 47 countries worldwide, comprising 23 developed and 24 emerging market countries. As of May 31, 2018, the developed market countries included were: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States. As of May 31, 2018, the emerging market countries included were: Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Czech Republic, Egypt, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Pakistan, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Russia, Qatar, South Africa, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey and United Arab Emirates. As of May 31, 2018, the MSCI® ACWI® IMI Core Real Estate Index comprised of 593 issuers with market capitalizations ranging from approximately \$74 million to \$49.8 billion. It is rebalanced quarterly.

The Fund is passively managed, which means it tries to duplicate the investment composition and performance of the MSCI® ACWI® IMI Core Real Estate Index by using computer programs and statistical procedures. The Fund's investment adviser will buy and sell securities in response to changes in the MSCI® ACWI® IMI Core Real Estate Index. Because the Fund will have fees and transaction expenses (while the MSCI® ACWI® IMI Core Real Estate Index has none), returns are likely to be below those of the MSCI® ACWI® IMI Core Real Estate Index.

The Fund invests in substantially all of the securities in the MSCI® ACWI® IMI Core Real Estate Index in approximately the same proportions as the index (i.e., replication). The proportions of the Fund's assets allocated to each country will approximate and vary with the relative country weights in the MSCI® ACWI® IMI Core Real Estate Index.

As of May 31, 2018, the MSCI® ACWI® IMI Core Real Estate Index had a country weight of approximately 46.39% to the United States.

The Fund's investment adviser expects that, under normal circumstances, the quarterly performance of the Fund, before expenses, will track the performance of the MSCI® ACWI® IMI Core Real Estate Index within a 0.95 correlation coefficient.

Morgan Stanley Capital International, Inc. ("MSCI") does not endorse any of the securities in the MSCI® ACWI® IMI Core Real Estate Index. It is not a sponsor of the Global Real Estate Index Fund and is not affiliated with the Fund in any way.

PRINCIPAL RISKS

CURRENCY RISK is the risk that foreign currencies, securities that trade in or receive revenues in foreign currencies, or derivatives that provide exposure to foreign currencies will fluctuate in value relative to the U.S. dollar, adversely affecting the value of the Fund's investments and its returns. Because the Fund's net asset value is determined on the basis of U.S. dollars, you may lose money if the local currency of a foreign market depreciates against the U.S. dollar, even if the market value of the Fund's holdings appreciates. In addition, fluctuations in the exchange values of currencies could affect the economy or particular business operations of companies in a geographic region in which the Fund invests, causing an adverse impact on the Fund's investments in the affected region.

CYBERSECURITY RISK is the risk of an unauthorized breach and access to fund assets, customer data (including private shareholder information), or proprietary information, or the risk of an incident occurring that causes the Fund, the investment adviser, custodian, transfer agent, distributor and other service providers and financial intermediaries to suffer data breaches, data corruption or lose operational functionality. Successful cyber-attacks or other cyber-failures or events affecting the Fund or its service providers may adversely impact the Fund or its shareholders.

DEPOSITORY RECEIPTS RISK. Foreign securities may trade in the form of Depositary Receipts. In addition to investment risks associated with the underlying issuer, Depositary Receipts may expose the Fund to additional risks associated with non-uniform terms that apply to Depositary Receipt programs, including credit exposure to the depository bank and to the sponsors and other parties with whom the depository bank establishes the programs, currency, political, economic, market and liquidity risks. Depositary Receipts are generally subject to

the same risks as the foreign securities that they evidence or into which they may be converted. Depositary Receipts may not track the price of the underlying foreign securities on which they are based, may have limited voting rights, and may have a distribution subject to a fee charged by the depository. As a result, equity shares of the underlying issuer may trade at a discount or premium to the market price of the Depositary Receipts.

EMERGING MARKETS RISK is the risk that markets of emerging market countries are less developed and less liquid, subject to greater price volatility and generally subject to increased economic, political, regulatory and other uncertainties than more developed markets.

FOREIGN SECURITIES RISK is the risk that investing in foreign (non-U.S.) securities may result in the Fund experiencing more rapid and extreme changes in value than a fund that invests exclusively in securities of U.S. companies, due to less liquid markets and adverse economic, political, diplomatic, financial, and regulatory events. Foreign governments also may impose limits on investment and repatriation and impose taxes. Any of these events could cause the value of the Fund's investments to decline. To the extent that the Fund's assets are concentrated in a single country or geographic region, the Fund will be subject to the risks associated with that particular country or region.

GEOGRAPHIC AND SECTOR RISK is the risk that if the Fund invests a significant portion of its total assets in certain issuers within the same geographic region or economic sector, an adverse economic, business or political development affecting that region or sector may affect the value of the Fund's investments more than if the Fund's investments were not so concentrated.

INTEREST RATE RISK is the risk that during periods of rising interest rates, the Fund's yield (and the market value of its securities) will tend to be lower than prevailing market rates; in periods of falling interest rates, the Fund's yield (and the market value of its securities) will tend to be higher. Securities with longer maturities tend to be more sensitive to changes in interest rates, causing them to be more volatile than securities with shorter maturities. Securities with shorter maturities tend to provide lower returns and be less volatile than securities with longer maturities. If interest rates rise, the Fund's yield may not increase proportionately, and the maturities of fixed income securities that have the ability to be prepaid or called by the issuer may be extended. The risks associated with increasing interest rates are heightened given that interest rates are near historic lows, but are expected to increase in the future with unpredictable effects on the markets and the Fund's investments. A general rise in interest rates may cause investors to move out of fixed income securities on a large scale, which could adversely affect the price and liquidity of fixed income securities and could also result in increased redemptions from the Fund. A low or declining interest rate environment poses additional risks to the Fund's performance, including the risk that proceeds from prepaid or maturing instruments may have to be reinvested at a lower interest rate. Fluctuations in interest rates may also affect the liquidity of fixed income securities and instruments held by the Fund.

INITIAL PUBLIC OFFERING ("IPO") RISK is the risk that the market value of shares in an initial public offering (IPO) will fluctuate considerably or decline shortly after the initial public offering, due to factors such as the absence of a prior public market, unseasoned trading, the small number of shares available for trading and limited information about the issuer.

LARGE CAP STOCK RISK is the risk that large-capitalization stocks as a group could fall out of favor with the market, causing the fund to underperform investments that focus solely on small- or medium-capitalization stocks.

LIQUIDITY RISK is the risk that the Fund will not be able to pay redemption proceeds in a timely manner because of unusual market conditions, an unusually high volume of redemption requests, legal restrictions impairing its ability to sell particular securities or close derivative positions at an advantageous market price or other reasons. Certain securities may be less liquid than others, which may make them difficult or impossible to sell at the time and the price that the Fund would like and the Fund may have to lower the price, sell other securities instead or forgo an investment opportunity. In addition, less liquid securities may be more difficult to value and markets may become less liquid when there are fewer interested buyers or sellers or when dealers are unwilling or unable to make a market for certain securities. Recently, dealers have generally been less willing to make markets for fixed income securities. All of these risks may increase during periods of market turmoil and could have a negative effect on the Fund's performance.

MANAGEMENT RISK is the risk that a strategy used by the Fund's investment adviser may fail to produce the intended results or that imperfections, errors or limitations in the tools and data used by the investment adviser may cause unintended results.

MARKET RISK is the risk that general market conditions, such as real or perceived adverse economic or political conditions, inflation, changes in interest rates, lack of liquidity in the bond or equity markets, volatility in the equities markets or adverse investor sentiment could cause the value of your investment in the Fund to decline. The market value of the securities in which the Fund invests may go up or down in response to the prospects of particular sectors or governments and/or general economic conditions throughout the world due to increasingly interconnected global economies and financial markets.

MID CAP STOCK RISK is the risk that stocks of mid-sized companies may be subject to more abrupt or erratic market movements than stocks of larger, more established companies. Mid-sized companies may have limited product lines or financial resources, and may be dependent upon a particular niche of the market.

REAL ESTATE SECURITIES CONCENTRATION RISK is the risk that investments in securities of real estate companies will make the Fund more susceptible to risks associated with the ownership of real estate and with the real estate industry in general. Real estate companies may have lower trading volumes and may be subject to more abrupt or erratic price movements than the overall securities markets. The value of real estate securities may underperform other sectors of the economy or broader equity markets. To the extent that the Fund concentrates its investments in the real estate sector, it may be subject to greater risk of loss than if it were diversified across different industry sectors.

REIT RISK is the risk that the Fund's investments will be affected by factors affecting REITs and the real estate sector generally. Investing in REITs involves certain unique risks in addition to those risks associated with investing in the real estate industry in general. These risks include possible declines in the value of real estate, possible lack of mortgage funds and unexpected vacancies of properties. REITs that invest in real estate mortgages are also subject to prepayment risks. REITs whose underlying properties are concentrated in a particular industry or geographic region are also subject to risks affecting such industries and regions. REITs are also subject to interest rate risks (especially mortgage REITs) and liquidity risks. By

investing in REITs through the Fund, a shareholder will bear expenses of the REITs in addition to expenses of the Fund.

SMALL CAP STOCK RISK is the risk that stocks of smaller companies may be subject to more abrupt or erratic market movements than stocks of larger, more established companies. Small companies may have limited product lines or financial resources, or may be dependent upon a small or inexperienced management group, and their securities may trade less frequently and in lower volume than the securities of larger companies, which could lead to higher transaction costs. Generally, the smaller the company size, the greater the risk.

TRACKING RISK is the risk that the Fund's performance may vary substantially from the performance of the benchmark index it tracks as a result of share purchases and redemptions, transaction costs, expenses and other factors.

VALUATION RISK is the risk that the sale price the Fund could receive for a portfolio security may differ from the Fund's valuation of the security, particularly for securities that trade in low volume or volatile markets or that are valued using a fair value methodology. In addition, the value of the securities in the Fund's portfolio may change on days when shareholders will not be able to purchase or sell the Fund's shares.

As with any mutual fund, it is possible to lose money on an investment in the Fund. An investment in the Fund is not a deposit of any bank and is not insured or guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, any other government agency, or The Northern Trust Company, its affiliates, subsidiaries or any other bank.

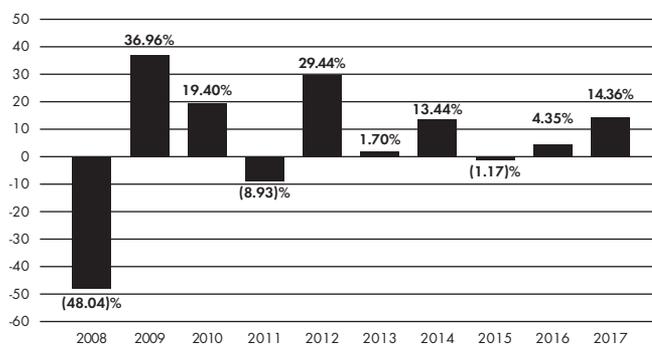
FUND PERFORMANCE

The bar chart and table that follow provide an indication of the risks of investing in the Fund by showing (A) changes in the performance of the Fund from year to year, and (B) how the average annual total returns of the Fund compare to those of a broad-based securities market index.

The Fund's past performance, before and after taxes, is not necessarily an indication of how the Fund will perform in the future.

Updated performance information for the Fund is available and may be obtained on the Fund's website at northerntrust.com/funds or by calling 800-595-9111.

CALENDAR YEAR TOTAL RETURN*



* Year to date total return for the six months ended June 30, 2018 is (0.32)%. For the periods shown in the bar chart above, the highest quarterly return was 36.26% in the second quarter of 2009, and the lowest quarterly return was (33.21)% in the fourth quarter of 2008.

AVERAGE ANNUAL TOTAL RETURN

(For the periods ended December 31, 2017)

	Inception Date	1-Year	5-Years	10-Years	Since Inception
Global Real Estate Index Fund	7/26/06				
Returns before taxes		14.36%	6.35%	3.14%	3.76%
Returns after taxes on distributions		13.07%	5.11%	2.05%	2.70%
Returns after taxes on distributions and sale of Fund shares		8.11%	4.39%	1.95%	2.50%
MSCI® ACWI® IMI Core Real Estate Index (reflects no deduction for fees, expenses, or taxes)		14.54%	6.94%	3.45%	6.00%
FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Global Index (reflects no deduction for fees, expenses, or taxes)*		13.99%	6.22%	3.11%	4.04%

After-tax returns are calculated using the historical highest individual federal marginal income tax rates and do not reflect the impact of state and local taxes. Actual after-tax returns depend on an investor's tax situation and may differ from those shown. After-tax returns shown are not relevant to investors who hold their shares through tax-deferred arrangements, such as 401(k) plans or individual retirement accounts.

* Effective July 31, 2018, the benchmark for the Fund changed from the FTSE EPRA/NAREIT Global Index to the MSCI® ACWI® IMI Core Real Estate Index in order to better align the Fund's underlying index with the Investment Adviser's view of the investable universe in the real estate sector and to provide additional representation of real estate investment trusts and broader market capitalization.

- By Mail – Send a written request to: Northern Funds, P.O. Box 75986, Chicago, Illinois 60675-5986.
- By Telephone – Authorize the telephone privilege on your New Account Application. Call 800-595-9111 to use the telephone privilege.
- By Wire – Authorize wire redemptions on your New Account Application and have proceeds sent by federal wire transfer to a previously designated bank account (the minimum redemption amount by this method is \$250). You will be charged \$15 for each wire redemption unless the designated bank account is maintained at Northern Trust or an affiliated bank. Call 800-595-9111 for instructions.
- By Systematic Withdrawal – If you own shares of the Fund with a minimum value of \$10,000, you may elect to have a fixed sum redeemed at regular intervals and distributed in cash or reinvested in one or more other funds of the Trust. Call 800-595-9111 for an application form and additional information. The minimum amount is \$250 per withdrawal.
- By Exchange – Complete the Exchange Privilege section of your New Account Application to exchange shares of one fund in the Trust for shares of another fund in the Trust. Shares being exchanged must have a value of at least \$1,000 (\$2,500 if a new account is being established by the exchange, \$500 if the new account is an IRA). Call 800-595-9111 for more information.
- By Internet – You may initiate transactions between Northern Trust banking and Fund accounts by using Northern Trust Private Passport. For details and to sign up for this service, go to northerntrust.com/funds or contact your Relationship Manager.

MANAGEMENT

INVESTMENT ADVISER AND PORTFOLIO MANAGER. Northern Trust Investments, Inc. (“NTI”), a subsidiary of Northern Trust Corporation, serves as the investment adviser of the Global Real Estate Index Fund. Thomas E. O’Brien, CFA, Vice President of Northern Trust Investments, Inc., has been a manager of the Fund since March 2008. The Northern Trust Company, an affiliate of Northern Trust Investments, Inc., serves as transfer agent, custodian and sub-administrator to the Fund.

PURCHASE AND SALE OF FUND SHARES

You may open an account directly with Northern Funds (the “Trust”) with a minimum initial investment of \$2,500 in the Fund (\$500 for an IRA; \$250 under the Automatic Investment Plan; and \$500 for employees of Northern Trust and its affiliates). The minimum subsequent investment is \$50 (except for reinvestments of distributions for which there is no minimum). The Fund reserves the right to waive these minimums. You may also purchase Fund shares through your account at Northern Trust (or an affiliate) or an authorized intermediary.

On any business day, you may sell (redeem) or exchange shares through your account by contacting your Northern Trust account representative or authorized intermediary. If you purchase shares directly from the Trust, you may sell (redeem) or exchange your shares in one of the following ways:

TAX INFORMATION

The Fund's distributions are generally taxable to you as ordinary income, qualified dividend income, capital gains, or a combination of the three, unless you are investing through a tax-exempt or tax-deferred arrangement, such as a 401(k) plan or an individual retirement account. Distributions may be taxable upon withdrawal from tax-deferred accounts.

PAYMENTS TO BROKERS-DEALERS AND OTHER FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES

If you purchase the Fund through a broker-dealer or other financial intermediary (such as a bank), the Fund and its related companies may pay the intermediary for the sale of Fund shares and related services. These payments may create a conflict of interest by influencing the broker-dealer or other intermediary and your salesperson to recommend the Fund over another investment. Ask your salesperson or visit your financial intermediary's website for more information.